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CHRONICLE**

AN INDEPENDENT MONTHLY REVIEW OF EDUCATION.

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JULY, 1950

## **Educational Progress in 1949**

**Standards of attainment not yet recovered from war-time deterioration, but more human atmosphere in Schools.**

An unusual feature of the Ministry of Education Annual Report, published on June 28th, is the inclusion of some impressions by H.M. Inspectors on the quality of work being done in the schools, which show that the effects of war-time conditions are still in evidence and in the age range particularly affected the standard is not so high as before the war. The following are a few extracts from these reports:

**Primary Schools.**—Generally, the older children in junior schools read more widely and write more freely than they did ten years ago, but in arithmetic it is probable that the standard of accurate mechanical work is lower.

The ability of children to calculate certainly deteriorated during the war and the ground has not been entirely recovered; tests set to comparable groups in pre-war days cannot be applied now.

Attainment in arithmetic has risen since 1946, but the level is not yet as high as it was before the war.

Poetry is ceasing to be something to be learnt by heart once a week—very occasionally children now write their own.

Infants' schools are making more progress and many are already giving a better education than they gave pre-war. The children may not do such difficult manipulations in sums, or read such difficult material, but this is part of a policy to try to increase their understanding of what they undertake.

**Children in Secondary Modern Schools** are developing a greater sense of responsibility, many of these schools are gaining from some of the traditions of the grammar schools. There is a dearth of laboratories and equipment and, in consequence, science has not made much headway. Teachers of science are few and insufficiently qualified but they are making gallant and successful attempts to cope with adverse conditions.

**The Secondary Grammar Schools** have gained less than other secondary schools by the changes of the Education Act of 1944, but there has been a growth in the size of sixth forms with the improved scholarship facilities to universities. One Inspector reports an improvement in modern language teaching, but another fears a steady

deterioration in science due to the difficulty of finding suitable teachers to fill vacancies as they occur.

The Ministry state that in the secondary schools, where the pupils had their earlier training under war-time conditions, there has been some deterioration, notably in science and mathematics and to some extent in English, but the best teachers are making determined efforts to overcome the difficulties that beset them.

In both primary and secondary schools there is a significant change in the attitude of the teachers towards their pupils. They are taking more notice of the abilities and aptitudes of individual children and are trying to provide for each to develop as far as he is able. There is a much more human atmosphere in the schools.

The Report, which for the first time includes some illustrations, reveals that by the end of 1949 no fewer than 665 new schools were under construction and a further eighty-six had been completed during the year. Of the schools being built seventy-nine were far enough advanced to be taken into partial use. The total amount of educational building under construction was £70 million, but although this is a considerable achievement, the Ministry state that an even more rapid rate must be the objective if the minimum needs of the increasing school population are to be met.

The number of children in primary and secondary schools rose during the year by over 170,000 to a total of over 5½ millions. The full effect of raising the school leaving age was felt and the number of children between the ages of fourteen and fifteen rose to 480,127. In January, 1947, the number was 150,101. The number of children of five years of age increased by 29,653, but there was no evidence to show that shortage of accommodation resulted in any material number of children failing to secure admission to school on or about their fifth birthday, although it was necessary in some places to restrict admission to children of that age.

The number of graduate teachers rose by 1,000 to 32,000, but many schools, especially girls' schools, found it difficult to fill posts in science and mathematics. The National Advisory Council are investigating this problem and the Ministry is watching the position carefully.

The total number of teachers in maintained primary

and secondary schools was 211,000, with 30,000 in training. It is estimated that by the beginning of 1954, 240,000 teachers will be wanted; an increase of over 11,000 men and nearly 18,000 women. The problem of securing in four years an increase of this number of women teachers presents a grave problem.

Although the ratio of teachers to children was a little better than in 1948, there was a small increase in the number of senior classes of over thirty pupils (33,131 to 34,518) and a small increase in junior and infant classes of over forty pupils (31,693 to 31,933). The number of classes with over fifty fell from 2,118 to 1,782. Although there was an increase in the number of over-size classes, there was also an increase in the total number of classes and the proportion of classes which were over-size fell during the year.

Dealing with the School Health Service, the Report states that the tendency of school dentists to transfer to general practice continued throughout 1949 and the position is now worse than it was during the war years. The figures on January 1st for the four years 1947 to 1950 are: 753; 921; 866; 738.

Accommodation for handicapped children in special schools was increased by adapting country mansions and other large buildings. Thirty-five new schools and fifteen new boarding homes were brought into use during the year. It is expected that the increase in the school population will result in a proportionate increase in the demand for places in special schools, but the effects of

the 1947 and 1949 epidemics of poliomyelitis cannot yet be fully assessed, nor can the possibility of their repetition be disregarded.

#### Increasing Awareness of Importance of Further Education

The Report shows that wide development in the field of Further Education is contemplated. Ninety-five of the 146 local education authorities estimate that their future capital expenditure will be: £89½ millions for county colleges; £47 millions for vocational education; and £10 millions for adult and youth services. Plans for county colleges have been submitted by 119 authorities. They generally favour release for one day a week rather than two half-days or full-time attendance for two months. Residential provision will be essential in remote rural districts, but not on such an extensive scale as was at first thought.

There was an increased demand all over the country for technical, commercial and art education. Conditions in many areas continued to be bad and every "hole and corner" had to be utilized for teaching provision. Work was started in 1949 on eighty-three major projects at a cost of over £5 millions which may not only keep pace with increasing demands but will do something to reduce overcrowding.

There was a steady rise in the number of young workers released by their employers during working hours to follow educational courses. In 1949 the number was 224,000 against 167,000 in 1947. A wider expansion of the scheme is not due to the reluctance of employers to release young people but to a shortage of accommodation.

98,000 applications have been received and more than 83,000 awards made under the Further Education and Training Scheme which is now coming to an end. Of these awards, 43,741 were held at universities or university colleges and the remainder at other institutions; 22,314 students wished to take up teaching, 11,283, engineering; 4,949, medicine; 4,825, architecture; 4,745, Civil Service; and 4,455 the ministry of the churches. It is estimated that by the 31st March, 1950, this scheme will have cost more than £42,600,000 in maintenance and fees.

The vote of the Ministry of Education for 1949-50 was £182 million; the staff, including H.M. Inspectors, totalled 3,401. A full account (the first since 1922) of the history, organization and functions of H.M. Inspectorate is given in the report, which can be obtained from H.M. Stationery Office for 5s. 6d.

#### Increases in Scottish Educational Grants

The sum of £22,300,000 for grants—£1,370,000 more than in the previous financial year—will be made available to Education Authorities for the financial year 1950-51, from the Education (Scotland) Fund, states a circular issued by the Scottish Education Department.

The Secretary of State for Scotland, Mr. Hector M'Neil, has decided, after taking into account the amount available in the Fund for Grants to education authorities in relation to their preliminary estimates of expenditure, to substitute a rate of 1s. 4d. for 1s. 10d. as the amount of the rate deduction in the formula for the calculation of the main grant to education authorities.

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## New Schools are Costing Less to Build

The cost of building new schools is going down. This was revealed by Mr. D. R. Hardman, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Education, when speaking to teachers at Dorchester a few days ago.

Mr. Hardman said that in 1949 the average costs per place of primary and secondary schools were £195 and £320 respectively. A 12½ per cent. cut was imposed to bring these figures for school building in 1950 down to £170 for primary and £290 for secondary schools and first returns for this year show figures well within these limits—£159 for primary and £276 for secondary schools. This included a primary school in Dorset costing £142 per place which, in his opinion, was a good deal better than some schools costing over £200 per place.

"We are now in a position to state from experience that quality and low cost can be combined," said Mr. Hardman, "and it is up to us to see that they are always combined."

Mr. Hardman referred to the closure of village schools as a difficult problem in which the sole criterion must be—"Will the children benefit?" He spoke of staffing difficulties in these schools, but said that full weight ought to be given to the advantages of the village school before it was agreed to transport young children miles each day for the sake of the wider facilities which they may enjoy in the larger school. The one consideration which did not enter the picture at all was administrative tidiness and convenience.

The schools, he added, must do more to equip the average boy and girl, in this age of ever-growing passive amusement, with those things which cut right at the roots of boredom in adolescence.

"Our business," said the Parliamentary Secretary, "is not to produce great men (they will look after themselves), but a great society of men and women free from economic anxiety and alert to the contemporary situation in terms of service and the good things of life."

He went on to suggest a school time-table which, he said, was not thought of in terms of unrelated subjects or of examinations, but in terms of the things of the mind, body and imagination which would excite youth. His own suggested time-table would include: command of the mother tongue in speech, song and the written words; delight in the ability to use numbers; the satisfaction of curiosity about the living earth and all things on it which arises from the study of the general principles of elementary science; delight in the arts without any thought of any one of them becoming sullied as an examination subject; the satisfaction of that urge of young life to achieve a co-ordination between hand and brain, which is called crafts; and lastly the inculcation of a sense of service in the school which is the surest way of making religion and the life of the spirit a living thing.

"It is along these lines that our best teachers are making the assault on that boredom which is the source of so much restlessness and evil in modern society," concluded Mr. Hardman.

## Building of Intermediate Schools in Northern Ireland Working Party Appointed

The composition of the Working Party appointed to expedite the building of intermediate schools in Northern Ireland has been announced by the Ministry of Education. The Working Party, which is representative of local education authorities and of the Ministries of Education and Finance, is as follows: Dr. J. Stuart Hawnt, O.B.E. (Director of Education, Belfast County Borough); Mr. E. H. Slade (Director of Education, Londonderry County Borough); Mr. K. A. MacCormac (Director of Education, County Antrim); Mr. W. R. Thornton (Education Architect, County Armagh); Mr. H. Dinsmore (Director of Education, County Down); Mr. D. Malone (Chief Education Officer, County Fermanagh); Alderman D. Hall Christie, C.B.E. (County Londonderry Education Committee); Mr. A. Gibson (Chief Education Officer, County Tyrone). The representatives of the Ministry of Education are Mr. W. H. Smyth, Assistant Secretary (who will act as Chairman of the Working Party), and Mr. A. J. Tulip (Staff Inspector of Intermediate Schools). The Ministry of Finance is represented by Mr. F. J. Fakiner (Works Division), and Mr. R. W. Donaldson. The Secretary of the Working Party is Mr. W. S. L. Baker, Ministry of Education.

Buckinghamshire Education Authority have approved a proposal to purchase camp beds at a cost of £563 for use in first-aid lectures in local schools.



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## Taking Stock

### Sir John Maud on the Present Position.

Speaking at the Annual Meeting of the Association of Education Committees last month, Sir John Maud, Permanent Secretary to the Ministry, said we were now half-way in the seven year race which began in 1947 and would end in December, 1953: the race to provide the 1,150,000 new school places which were the first priority requirement in carrying out the 1944 Education Act. Sir John invited the meeting to take stock of the present position in respect of school buildings, teachers and the system of educational administration.

He said that towards the 1,150,000 school places needed, 850,000 were already in sight and would be ready when the 1950 and previous building programmes had been carried out. "We must and can ensure that at least another 300,000 are ready for use by the end of 1953," stated Sir John.

In the last two months of 1949 local education authorities had made a tremendous spurt with their building programmes. This meant that it would be difficult to start the whole of the 1950 building programme before the end of this calendar year. Sir John therefore announced that the currency of the 1950 programme would be extended into 1951 to the end of the financial year 1950/51. This would avoid a repetition of the bunching of new starts in the worst building weather and would give authorities rather more time to complete their plans of new buildings.

A short list of buildings to be started in 1951 had been announced in February last. Sir John told the conference that the total building programme for the financial year 1951/52 would be about £50 million. This was double the size of the short list already announced.

### Supply of Teachers

As regards teachers, Sir John remarked on the tremendous success of the Emergency Teacher Training Scheme, which had now nearly been completed. Some 35,000 men and women from the services would have been trained for teaching under this scheme. It was now vital to ensure that all the men so trained should be found early employment in the schools and Sir John urged local education authorities to seize the opportunity of securing the men now available to tide them over their increasing needs in the next few years. The second great achievement in teacher training since the war had been the expansion of the normal two-year colleges for women. It was now crucially important to find suitable women recruits to fill all the new places in the training colleges next September.

### Administration

A new administrative system had been established under the 1944 Education Act. Sir John said that there were two respects in which we must now seek to improve this democratic system. There must be more freedom and more efficiency. These ends must be sought by a clearer division of labour between the Ministry of Education and local education authorities and by more complete understanding between central and local administrators and between administrators, parents and teachers. The Ministry was already giving greater discretion to local education authorities particularly in respect of new buildings and intended to carry this process further. Sir John stressed the importance of

respecting the rights of parents and the rights of teachers and of ensuring that the public understood the principles on which local education authorities worked, particularly in the choice of schools for individual children. The function of administration was to minister to the essential needs of parents and teachers so that the latter might give the children the best education possible. He knew of no educational system in any part of the world which was superior to our own. It remained for us to demonstrate with increasing clarity that it was possible to combine the freedom of parents and teachers with efficiency and economical use of public funds in one educational system.

## Teachers' Salaries

Teachers salaries have been the subject of several questions in Parliament in recent weeks.

Replying to Major Bevins, who asked if the Minister would give an estimate of the gross total cost to his Department and local authorities involved by increasing all teachers' salaries, so that the minima and maxima are 80s. above the 1938 figures; and also the percentage such increased cost bears to the gross total cost of education, Mr. Tomlinson said the salaries now paid to teachers are at rates above those applied in 1938, but owing to the changes introduced by the Education Act, 1944, and subsequent Burnham Reports, any calculation of the cost of an increase by a specific amount would be difficult to make and misleading.

A similar question was put by Mr. Garner-Evans, who asked the estimated cost of increasing schoolmaster's salaries to a level at which their purchasing power would be equal to that of 1938.

Mr. Hardman referred the questioner to the Minister's answer, as above, and added that the changes referred to introduced so many and involved factors that it was impracticable to calculate an estimate in the form suggested.

Later Wing-Commander Bullus asked what was the total cost of salaries of teachers in England and Wales for the year 1938-39; what was the cost of salaries of administrative staff for the education service as a whole in the same year; and what are the comparative figures for the latest available post-war year.

In reply, Mr. Tomlinson said the total expenditure of local education authorities on the salaries of teachers in maintained schools and other maintained educational institutions was, on the basis of the pre-audit actual returns of authorities for 1938-39, £53,819,500, and on the basis of the revised estimates for 1949-50, £104,723,800. He had no separate statistics of the cost of the salaries of the administrative staffs of local education authorities. The gross expenditure of authorities on administration and inspection which includes, in addition to salaries and wages, other items such as stationery, postage, travelling and other general office expenses, was about £3,568,000 in 1938-39, as compared with about £11 million on the basis of the revised estimates of authorities for 1949-50.

The first county-wide survey made since the war of the heights and weights of London school pupils took place last autumn and a comparison with the 1938 survey shows that both for boys and girls and at every age there have been increases in height and weight. The average increase for height was about 1.3 per cent. of the 1938 level and for weight, 2.2 per cent.





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## Education of Deaf Children

Several questions relating to the education of deaf children were directed to the Minister of Education in the House of Commons last month by Sir W. Wakefield, Sir J. Lucas and Mr. Erroll.

In reply to Sir W. Wakefield's first question as to the average size of deaf children's classes, Mr. Tomlinson said that in January, 1949, there were, on the average, 10.8 pupils in each class for the deaf or partially deaf.

Sir W. Wakefield then asked what steps were being taken to obtain separate education for the partially and the severely deaf, and to provide adequate provision for children suffering from double defects, and Sir J. Lucas enquired what action the Minister was taking to alleviate the shortage of schools for deaf children.

Replying, Mr. Tomlinson, said the increase in deaf school accommodation during the past two years had enabled places to be found for an additional 200 deaf children, but unfortunately, owing largely to the increasing appreciation that deaf education should begin at a very early age, there was still a waiting list of some 450 children for deaf schools. He was doing everything possible to expedite proposals for further deaf school accommodation in the next year or two. The accepted policy of separating the education of the partially deaf from that of the deaf was being carried out as far as the existing accommodation permitted. A small increase was being made in the provision for deaf children suffering from a second defect and he looked forward to further proposals as soon as the shortage of ordinary deaf school places had been substantially reduced.

Mr. Erroll then asked what steps were being taken in the schools to detect deafness; to deal with diseases which may cause it; and to make treatment available where necessary.

Deafness, said the Minister, is detected in the schools at the periodical medical inspections, at special medical inspections to which individual children have been referred by their teachers or by the school nurse, and by group audiometer tests. Facilities for the treatment of diseases which may cause deafness are available through the school health service and the National Health Service.

Two more questions by Sir W. Wakefield later in the month related to the steps being taken to ensure that there are an adequate number of properly qualified teachers for the teaching of deaf children, and to what had been done to obtain more foster parents for deaf children and the organization of a list of them.

Replying to the first of these Mr. Tomlinson said the number of full-time teachers in schools for the deaf and partially deaf has increased steadily from 356 to 411 between January, 1946, and January, 1949, the latest date for which he had figures. A further increase will be needed, particularly of women teachers, in the next few years to keep pace with the provision of additional deaf school accommodation, and the problem of meeting this need is being investigated.

In regard to the question of foster parents the Minister said that children who do not live within reach of a day deaf school normally go to boarding schools, and hardly any cases had come to his notice of deaf children needing to be boarded out with foster parents in order to attend a deaf school. It would be for the local education authority to make suitable arrangements in such cases, and he had not found it necessary to take any action in the matter.

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## London Nautical School to be Reorganized

From September, 1951, it is proposed to reorganize the residential section of the London Nautical School at Woolverstone, on the banks of the River Orwell, as a secondary boarding school, giving a general secondary education for an age range 11-16+ years. The nautical instruction which now forms the core of the school curriculum, will of necessity play a less conspicuous part, and the wearing of naval uniforms by the boys would be discontinued. Entrants will continue to be recruited on the widest possible basis.

In September of this year, it may be possible to recruit in addition to the usual one form of boys aged 13+ years, some boys aged 11+, provided that the necessary staffing arrangements can be made.

A long-term building scheme is to be prepared for replacing present temporary accommodation, but as this is unlikely to be put into effect for at least five years, it is proposed to meet an urgent need for a gymnasium and a dining hall by the erection of a prefabricated building at a cost of about £6,900.

The estimated cost of maintaining the existing buildings, including the Nissen huts, over the next five years is about £30,000.

**Free passes** to the public baths for August will be given to 120 Dagenham schoolchildren who have made the most progress during the swimming season.

## Employment of Men Teachers

Owing to the large numbers of men who have recently completed or are about to complete their training under the Ministry's Emergency Teacher Training Scheme some have failed to obtain teaching posts. This is the final year of the Emergency Training Scheme and the problem will not recur next year when the number of men trained under this Scheme will be only a few hundreds.

At the Annual Conference of the Association of Education Committees held at Scarborough last month the Association adopted a resolution asking all local education authorities to make a special effort during this year to ensure that men completing training are employed. This is desirable both in the interests of the men themselves and in those of the service.

In a Circular (222) just issued to education authorities, the Ministry asks that authorities should give early and urgent consideration to the advisability of appointing teachers now against their requirements for next year. Failure to take advantage of the relatively free supply of men teachers now available, says the Circular, might result in the loss of teachers to the schools because the men are unable to wait on the possibility of employment at a later date. In some areas, for example, where teachers are available, authorities may be well advised to appoint in the autumn more teachers than they would ordinarily consider necessary having regard to the number of class spaces in their schools; or they may find that their establishments could usefully include a larger proportion of supply teachers than at present.

In reviewing their requirements for the coming school year, the Ministry suggests that authorities should bear in mind that if the available teachers are to be deployed to the best advantage, there must be the fullest possible employment of men, and that the aim, over the country as a whole, must be to employ men in approximately 40 per cent. of the posts in junior schools and 60 per cent. of the posts in secondary schools. Further, the Minister reminds authorities that, as was stated in Circular 210, "there is to be no going back on reforms already instituted or on the plans by which the number of teachers in primary and secondary schools will be increased with the increasing school population."

## Unesco's New Education Chief

Mr. Lionel Elvin, formerly Principal of Ruskin College, Oxford, has taken up his duties as Head of Unesco's Education Department, in succession to Dr. C. E. Beeby, now Director of Education in New Zealand.

Mr. Elvin started teaching English Literature at Cambridge University in 1930, two years after graduating from there with a first-class Honours Degree. During the war he served in the British Air Ministry, and the Ministry of Information where he was in charge of the Labour and Industry Section, American Division.

In 1945 he resigned his Cambridge Fellowship to become Principal of Ruskin College. Since then he has been a member of the University Grants Committee, of the Secondary Schools Examinations Council, and in 1948 was appointed to the Central Advisory Council on Education.

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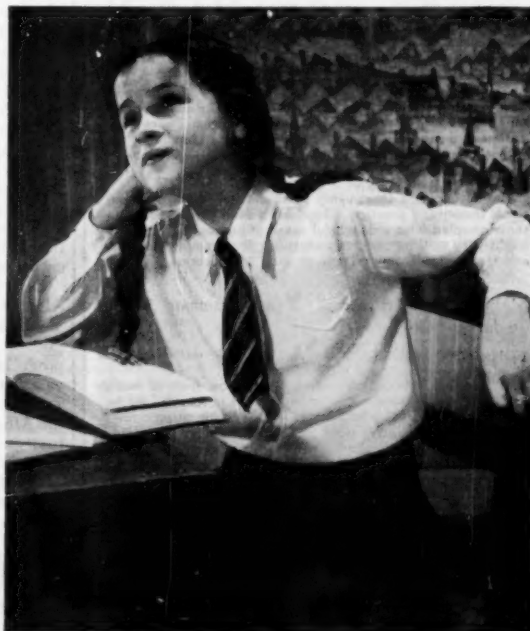
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## National Institute of Adult Education

The first Annual Report of the National Institute of Adult Education does more than survey the Institute's record for 1949/50. A brief account is given of the establishment of the National Institute and a detailed chronological survey of the activities of the two organizations, the British Institute and the National Foundation, which merged to form the National Institute. This summary of activities shows a rich tradition of service performed by these two bodies.

The report shows that much of the first year has been devoted to consideration of the Institute's functions and policy, though much new work likely to be of importance has been launched. An enquiry into the expansion of liberal education in Evening Institutes and Colleges of Further Education has been undertaken and much preliminary work done towards it. The other functions of the Institute are reviewed and defined in the report as:

a.—to provide a centre where enquirers from home and overseas may obtain information and advice and be put in touch with the bodies or persons best able to meet their particular needs;

b.—to publish such material, and especially Adult Education, as is necessary to provide a regular exchange of information, opinion and experience, and to give publicity to research and experiments of interest to workers in the field;

c.—to assist, or sponsor, investigation by individual or corporate members.

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## Youth Employment Service Progress in London

The General Purposes Sub-Committee of the L.C.C. Education Committee, in reviewing the work carried out by the Youth Employment Service in the four months since 1st January, state that the methods of operation of the service described in their previous report have become more established and that many necessary and useful contacts have been developed in linking the service with associated activities in educational social and industrial spheres. An increasing number of employers have been visited in canvassing for particular occupations, ascertaining conditions of employment and in building up surveys of industries. Close co-operation is being maintained with apprenticeship and training committees responsible for implementing national schemes of recruitment and training of young workers.


The number of school-leaving interviews held during the four months' period was 5,705. The work of care committees in providing information regarding school leavers and in visiting young persons at the request of youth employment officers, has proved most valuable.

There were 16,230 new registrations for employment in the four months; 15,212 of these were from new secondary (including former central) schools, 446 from grammar schools, 379 from technical schools and 193 from special schools. In addition, 1,526 registrations for employment were outstanding at the beginning of the year. The number placed in employment was 15,535, of whom 3,065 were resident in areas adjacent to the county; 260 London boys and girls were placed by the co-operation of neighbouring authorities. 4,309 registrations lapsed, many of them representing young persons who found their own employment. Vacancies have continued to exceed the number of applicants, there being 16,049 vacancies on 30th April, 1950, compared with 177 outstanding registrations for employment. The high level of employment is also illustrated by the fact that only £546 was paid out in national insurance benefit during the period and £108 in national assistance grants.

An appraisal of the work of advising and placing leavers dealt with during the previous term indicates that the great majority are settling down well and of the comparatively small number who sought further advice and assistance many were young people who had entered the first situation through sources other than the youth employment service.


On 1st April, the work hitherto carried out by the After Care Association for Physically Handicapped Youth and by the Health and Welfare Committees of the Council in vocational guidance, placing and review of progress of handicapped young persons under eighteen years, was transferred to the youth employment service. Tribute is paid to the very valuable work performed by the After Care Association over many years and appreciation is expressed of the friendly co-operation of the Association in the transfer of the work and in making available to the youth employment service its extensive knowledge and experience.

Four hundred and five of the 1,517 schools which have so far applied for aided status are proposed for ultimate closure under the development plans of the local education authorities. In many cases, however, the plans indicate that the schools will be replaced by new voluntary schools.

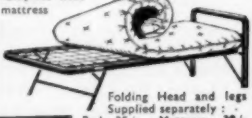


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
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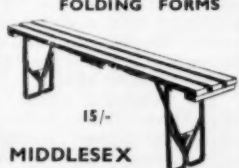


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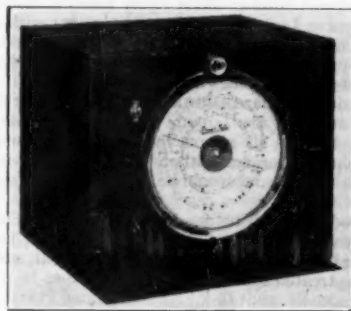


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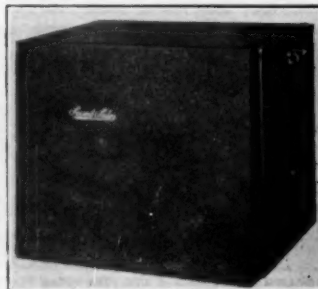


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## Science Brings School to Crippled Children

Electronic science has brought school directly from distant classrooms to more than 1,000 American children kept from normal physical attendance because of handicaps resulting from serious illness or disabling accidents. By means of two-way voice communication over telephone wires between electrical devices in school classrooms and in rooms of homes or hospitals, the crippled children have been able to get the full advantages of regular education as well as the psychological benefits of indirect contact with schoolmates.

The system, which is described in *The Crippled Child*, official magazine of the American Society National for Crippled Children and Adults of Chicago, Illinois, has been in use for ten years in Iowa and other parts of the middle western region of the United States. A portable two-way radio set in the classroom picks up and transmits every spoken word over a leased telephone wire to the crippled student's bedroom. There, over a similar radio set, he answers the class roll call, recites his lessons and maintains voice contact with the teacher and his classmates. The classroom radio unit is plugged into outlets in the various rooms of the school, permitting the pupil at home to "move about."

The "electrical school" has not only successfully brought education to shut-in children, but has helped the chances for recovery, through psychological stimulus, of many young victims of infantile paralysis, arthritis, tuberculosis and cardiac ailments.

A number of the crippled pupils have not only kept abreast of their fellow pupils who attended classes in the ordinary manner, but have out-distanced them in reaching high scholastic achievement. One boy from Mason City, Iowa, who never saw the inside of his school, was elected president of his class. Three high school students of different schools led their classes.

A sixty-year-old victim of arthritis, who lived on a farm near the town of Ottumwa, studied for four years at the "electrical school" after three and one half miles of special telephone construction had been carried out to make her "attendance" possible.

Other kinds of schooling problems due, not to disease, but to distance, are also being solved by modern methods of communication elsewhere in the world.

In such diverse places as New Zealand, France, Nigeria and China, radio has been a vital element in bringing learning to those who would otherwise be deprived. New Zealand has combined radio lectures with recitations by mail for children in inaccessible places.

In Paris, the Sorbonne provides courses by radio—an enormous advantage to many who cannot attend classes, notably the mothers of small children.

Both in Nigeria and China, as well as in other relatively under-developed areas, collective radio listening has brought vital knowledge—of health, better living and wider cultural horizons—to children and grown ups alike.—UNESCO.

## Schoolboy's Claim against Lancashire County Council Fails

A schoolboy who did not wear pads while playing cricket and sustained an ankle injury failed in his action for damages at Liverpool Assizes. Judgment with costs was given for Lancashire County Council, the defendants.

The boy, Stanley Robert Henwood, 14, of Huyton House Road, Huyton, sued through his father.

Mr. Justice Pritchard said that he did not think it was negligent to allow the boy to play without pads. It would be beyond all reason that because some small boys were playing cricket without pads, those responsible for organizing the game would be liable to pay damages in law.

Henwood was batting for his class team at Huyton Secondary Modern School, in May, 1948, when he was hit by the ball on the right ankle. The incident, said the judge, was treated by everyone as trifling.

## Essex to Spend £1,300 on Films

The Essex County Film Library now carries 500 reels of film, but this number has been found to be inadequate to meet the demands from schools visited by the Mobile Units and from those with their own projectors, more than seventy of which have now been allocated. In addition it is necessary to replace worn films and to duplicate existing copies. The Essex Education Committee therefore resolved, at their last meeting, to recommend that approval be given in principle to the expenditure of a sum of £1,300 provided in the financial estimates for the purchase of new films (approximately £450) and replacement and additional copies (approximately £850).

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## What do Children Want to Read ?

By H. E. BODEN

It must first be admitted that the youth of the country can still be divided into two broad sections—the literate, and the illiterate. The minimum knowledge of spelling, together with a scant acquaintance with grammar, is not sufficient to lead to any interest in the printed word other than can be easily satisfied by the tabloid newspaper, or, more easily still, by the brightly-coloured but ill-produced 'comics' that continue to appear, however short is newsprint for text-books and classical reprints, week by week. This illiterate half of the juvenile populace must, therefore, be disregarded in a brief survey of what present-day children want to read.

*Chums* and *Little Folks* have, alas, had their day and vanished. The new *Collins' Magazine* comes to fill their place, but, admirably though its contents are chosen and excellent as is its format, its price—one and sixpence a copy—and the fact that it is at present only obtainable here on a subscription basis, place it beyond the reach of many possible readers. On the other hand, these very facts raise it into another category—that of a suitable birthday or Christmas present; it should be, too, in school libraries.

*Children's Digest* and *Junior* are other publications that presuppose their readers to have a sensible equipment of intelligence and taste. The twin weeklies, *Scout* and *Guide*, continue to cater for children who want more from their reading than mere sensationalism; so does *The Boys' Own Paper*, though the sister paper that was once equally loved as the G.O.P., seems to have sadly strayed from the old standards of information-as-entertainment into something rather more elderly, and to have left an unfilled gap behind it.

To leave the periodicals and discuss such literature for children as appears in book form, it seems that a liking for realism is well to the fore. It is not that adventure is eschewed, but it must be possible adventure and the adventurers real people who act as adolescents might be supposed to act, neither without an adequate equipment of brains, nor with a priggishly over-large allowance of them. Foremost among the writers catering for this type of storybook comes, of course, Arthur Ransome, who, if a survey was taken among literate children as to their choice of modern author, would probably top any list with a very handsome lead; but then, Ransome devotes as much care to the development of the character of his book-children as he does to every detail of boats and sailing them. Lack of such character in storybook heroes and heroines, although it may not stop a book being avidly read to the finish, does very often lead to a sense of dissatisfaction and to subsequent books by the same author being eschewed.

As for the excitements and adventures most in demand in these modern books, those that portray such that may one day be enjoyed by the young reader himself, hold pride of place; the books about boats, about ponies, about tents; children may not all have ponies or canoes, or go camping, but all these things are possible attainments in a happy future; many fewer children are ever likely to sail the Pacific and live on a desert island and fewer still will become detective-inspectors, let alone run private enquiry agencies of their own.

The day of "Eric" and such books as obviously try to convey a moral, is gone, but there still remains a strong liking for the 'decent' hero—the boy who is the type chosen as head of his school one day—and head masters do not choose for their head boys people who excel in games only; a mild—very mild—love interest may hover distantly about a girl heroine, but juvenile readers, while admitting this probability, because their favourite heroines are drawn from the womanly-type of girl, who can cook, even though she backs a horse, and bandage a sprained ankle as well as climb a tree, prefer the comradeship of the playing field.

The general make-up of a book, too, has a great deal to do with its popularity. Garishly-coloured picture boards are frowned upon by readers who take pride in their growing library; rough paper and clumsy type are other disadvantages that weigh against the sale of a book. If there are illustrations, no critic is keener than the child who enjoys the subject portrayed; a bad seat in a saddle, where a good one is written about, the mis-picturing of a thwart, a disarrangement of tent pegs and guy-lines, all such things are promptly noted and frowned upon by the juvenile expert and pointed out to the comparatively unobservant adult.

This then, appears to be what is wanted to-day; a well-produced book or periodical that offers possible adventure true to detail, written around wholesome characters who are recognizably young people, and which does not offend, in its style and structure, tastes that, while still immature, are being founded on literature greater than any that can be written for the adolescent alone.

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## Month by Month

### The Ministry's Report.

THE Report of the Ministry for 1949 has attracted more than usual attention by what *The Times* calls its "extremely frank section" on the Quality of Education in Primary and Secondary Schools. One may agree with the editorial comment of that journal regarding the merit of such frankness. It is "encouraging that the Ministry should be willing to share its knowledge of weaknesses in the system with the general public." It is, however, discouraging to those who work in or for those schools when their admitted successes are so largely ignored. The report has been very generally regarded as answering affirmatively the question to which it is in fact said that no objective answer can be given, viz., has there been a general decline in the standards of educational attainment. Comparison is apparently made between 1949 and 1939 since H.M. Inspectors are quoted whose inspectorial work was in suspense during the war. The Report asks what sort of education is being given now in our schools. The Ministry's general conclusions have been described as ominous. It is represented that children dabble in a variety of intelligent hobbies and useful interests which they could as easily pursue out of school hours. Their minds are not trained and disciplined as they should be. The essentials of education have been neglected and have deteriorated—the very parts of education which only the schools can give. Hence it is easy to conclude, and not unjustly either, that the first task of post-war education should have been to repair the war damage suffered by the educational system and to restore the standards of educational attainment, before proceeding to raise the school leaving age and otherwise implement the Butler Act. One liberal journal suggested that if the minimum age for compulsory schooling were raised and the maximum age lowered, more children could have the better education which they need.

"There is," says the Report, "some evidence of a fall in standards." "One inspector" reports a deterioration in the ability of children to calculate. Another says that the level reached in examination English and Arithmetic is "not yet as high as it was before the war." On the other hand certain "typical passages" from H.M. Inspectors notes assert that children of nine and ten "read more widely and write more freely than they did ten years ago" and that in part any lowering of the standard of "accurate mechanical work" in arithmetic is "no loss" since in other and more important ways greater gains have been made. It is perhaps unfortunate that the Ministry gave to the public these "sample snapshots" of H.M. Inspectors. They are but snapshots and in some cases singularly unlike what they purport to portray. It would be interesting to know if all the inspectors, whose notes have been used, were inspecting schools twelve years ago. The Ministry concludes that "many modern schools are now human civilising places" as if there was once a time when "modern" or senior schools were inhuman and decivilising. School visits to factories, the council chamber, hospitals and other places of interest and the visits of speakers to schools are seriously mentioned as if they were some new

post-war development in the education of senior pupils. It is stated that most "modern" schools have failed to come to grips with the problems of how to meet intellectual needs and how to stimulate fullest effort. One inspector is quoted in support of this damaging criticism. He found—whether in many schools or few he does not say—too much attention given to exercises of a purely formal character designed to make for more accurate use of words. He mentioned as examples "filling blanks in sentences, choosing an appropriate word from a group with similar meanings" and so on. It is regrettable that such a rare activity should be quoted as if it were typical of the English work in the "Modern" Secondary Schools of England. It is not too much to say that the paragraphs relating to schools of that type parody rather than portray what they have done and are doing. Credit is given for present achievements but only on the mistaken assumption that until 1949 teachers took no cognizance of their children's aptitudes and abilities. It is noted with approval that many "Modern" schools are gaining from some of the traditions of the Grammar schools. Nothing is said of the genuine and distinctive traditions which the former schools are building up for themselves.

#### **The Examination Age Limit.**

In his Speech Day address the Head Master of Harrow, Dr. R. W. Moore attacked the age limit for the General Certificate as "a shabby innovation, educationally indefensible and supported only by a crude philosophy using education as its tool." The age limit would hold back the able, fetter the schools concerned and seriously "level down" the standards in those schools which, he said, "have not the manpower for re-adjusting their curriculum." Any possible benefits of the age limit he regarded as undone by its constriction on individual needs. Dr. Moore appealed to the Minister of Education to "execute one of those courageous decisions by which Ministers have afforded overnight a universal and welcome relief" and to let us wake one morning to find the age-limit abolished. Dr. Moore's speech was noteworthy as indicating the profound dissatisfaction which still exists among school masters and school mistresses with a decision most vigorously opposed at the time. It is a remarkable fact that in this matter independent schools should be content with no more freedom than maintained schools.

#### **University Awards.**

In Chapter VI of *Education in 1949* the Ministry refer briefly to the issue in July, 1949, of Administrative Memorandum 332 which announced the Minister's adoption for State Awards of the Working Party's recommendations. In that Memorandum the Minister expressed the hope that local education authorities would apply the same rates and principles of assistance in making their own Major Awards. The rates there given were the latest and the highest of successive scales formerly recommended by the Ministry. Attention was but recently drawn in these notes to the fact that the Ministry had recommended and not directed local education authorities to adopt the scales set forth in July, 1949, and that some authorities had strongly objected to the proposals. It was not perhaps surprising that the Association of Education Committees should

have submitted to them by their Executive Council last month a resolution urging upon Education Committees "the importance of reviewing and extending their provision for major awards, as recommended in the Report of the Working Party." Mr. Alderman F. C. Williams (Bristol), who moved the resolution, was frankly concerned with the future supply of teachers. Mr. E. H. Woodhead, Director of Education for Kent, seconded the resolution with certain hesitation, because of the increased expenditure which it advocated. The resolution was, of course, carried. There was no criticism of Mr. Woodhead's statement that an adequate number of Major Awards was necessary and that they must be awards of a sufficient amount. It is, however, considered by a number of local education authorities that the figures suggested in Administrative Memorandum 332 go substantially beyond what should be regarded as sufficient. Mr. Alderman A. Hoare (Middlesex) told the Association that his Committee had no intention whatever of accepting the Minister's scale. The Ministry's Report discloses that by the end of 1949 only some fifty authorities had decided to adopt the scale recommended by the Ministry and that even some of these adopted the new rates and principles "in part" only.

The Ministry has now issued Circular 221 in which local education authorities are once more urged to come into line with the Ministry in the assessment of Major Awards. The Minister expresses his appreciation of the spirit in which local education authorities as a whole have co-operated with him in giving effect to the new policy. He is able to announce that two-thirds of the authorities have now adopted wholly or substantially

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the rates and principles of assessment recommended in A.M. 332. The wording of the Circular tends to obscure the time which has elapsed since that Administrative Memorandum was issued and disguise as success what comes near to failure—"Already some two-thirds of the authorities have adopted . . . the new rates." If one-third of the authorities have not adopted those rates even "in part" and if another third or so only have adopted them "in toto," then the Ministry's circular may have little persuasive effect. To the other matters mentioned careful consideration should be given. The division of university awards into two classes with higher rates of assistance is surely to misuse the power of financial aid given to authorities. Such differentiation seems wholly to mistake the true purpose of financial help for university students. The granting of loans is deprecated, but there seems to be no recognition by the Minister that most of the loans are made to recognized students in training for the teaching profession. It is in this case the Minister's scale that is found to be inadequate and which authorities are tempted to supplement by loans.

\* \* \*

**The Religious Settlement.** The most debated resolution at the Annual General Meeting of the Association of Education Committees was one submitted by the Executive Committee, "that this Association, noting various proposals for amendment of the Religious Settlement embodied in the Education Act, 1944, desires to urge upon the Minister of Education the necessity for maintaining that Settlement." Alderman H. Cropper,

O.B.E., J.P. (Chesterfield) eloquently set forth the reasons why, in his opinion, and that of the Executive, the Religious Settlement should be maintained. He was ably seconded by Alderman B. G. Lampard-Vachell, LL.B., J.P. There was no doubt that the meeting generally approved the motion. It was, however, notable that no good reason was given for the submission of the resolution. The Minister had already declared quite unequivocally his conviction that the settlement should be maintained. He had in Parliament most plainly refused to introduce any legislation that would have that effect. Mr. Butler, for the opposition, had expressed the same view. It was therefore difficult to understand why the Association should be asked to "urge upon the Minister" views which he had already so publicly proclaimed. The motion served to rouse passions which might better have been left dormant. The mover's speech was more like 1902 than 1950 in its general tone, even though Alderman Cropper rightly disclaimed any animus against voluntary schools as such. The most effective of several telling speeches against the motion was by Alderman W. F. E. Smith (Newport), to which the mover entirely failed to reply. It is rarely that the Association hears one of their Executive's spokesmen so ably and so effectively challenged point by point on his speech.

### National Federation of Educational Film Groups

The Third Annual Visual Aids Exhibition of the National Federation of Educational Film Groups will be held this year at the Central Technical College, Suffolk Street, Birmingham, on September 22nd and 23rd.

The Exhibition will be officially opened on September 22nd by Mr. E. L. Russell, M.A., Chief Education Officer, Birmingham, and on September 23rd by Alderman Sir Wilfred Martineau, M.C., T.D., M.A., Chairman of the Birmingham Education Committee.

It may be remembered that the first annual exhibition was held on May 22nd, 1948, at King's College, London, and, backed by the Kinematograph Manufacturers' Association, was generally regarded as the most complete and comprehensive exhibition of all types of visual aids seen in this country. The second exhibition held at the College of Technology, Manchester, on September 17th, 1949, was officially opened by Alderman W. P. Jackson, Chairman of Manchester Education Committee, and was considered to be an improvement on the first. This year's exhibition will be wider in scope than in previous years and will represent Audio-Visual Aids in the widest sense, a number of new exhibitors taking part in addition to the older established firms. Displays of the most recent educational films and filmstrips will be given throughout the two days during which the exhibition will this year be open.

The support received by the Federation encourages the belief that the work on visual aids actually done in the schools by those teachers really interested in the matter, and the methods traditional to this country of making available an analysis of opinion based on actual usage by experienced teachers, is being understood and appreciated.

The Annual Conference of the Federation will be held on September 23rd in the same building. Every member of an affiliated Group is entitled to attend, and as important items will be discussed, a representative attendance is anticipated. The Conference will be followed by a meeting of the Council, on which Groups are represented on the basis of one representative per hundred members.

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# Festina Lente

## State Education and the Crisis

BY SCHOOL MANAGER

This financial year the country is spending, in round figures, £275,000,000 on State education. This colossal sum, which has to be found by the tax and rate payers, that is by every single one of us, is more than double the expenditure in 1938 and more than the total ordinary revenue of the whole country in 1914.

Is the country getting value for money? Unfortunately the answer must be an emphatic "No."

Not long ago the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, Field Marshal Slim, stated that no less than 2,000 illiterates, who cannot even sign their names, enter the Army each year. To this the education authorities retorted that this only represented 2 per cent. of those leaving school and, therefore, the figure was a matter for congratulation rather than censure.

Shortly afterwards, on September 30th, 1949, the Director of Navy Recruiting stated, in Edinburgh, that 40 per cent. of applicants for the Royal Navy, boys of fourteen to fifteen, are rejected because they are unable to pass a simple education test; they cannot add simple fractions or spell correctly three words out of twenty. Is this another 2 per cent. or more?

At the same time the Montgomeryshire Police announced that they had been compelled to detail a sergeant and a senior constable to instruct recruits in elementary English and mathematics. Is this yet another 2 per cent.? The percentage seems to be rising rather rapidly.

Obviously, there is something seriously wrong. The country cannot afford to go on pouring millions of pounds into one end of the educational sausage machine if the result is to turn out ... usands of illiterates at the other. Where then is the money going and what can be done to improve matters? No one can say that the teachers are overpaid. Is it a case of swollen staff at the Ministry of Education and throughout the country, the baleful effects of bureaucracy, or is something fundamentally wrong with our school organization?

At last year's conference at Derby, the National Federation of Class Teachers passed a resolution demanding more teachers and smaller classes. In the discussion on the resolution it was repeatedly stressed by delegates that classes to-day were too large for any teacher to give the individual attention which is essential. The dullards sank into the background and were moved up from infants to junior and junior to secondary purely on age, without any reference to scholastic ability. Here was evidently one source of these many illiterates.

Are the education authorities and teachers themselves entirely free from blame for this state of affairs? Whatever one's personal views may be on the raising of the school-leaving age, and though the timing of it was largely political, the education authorities and teachers' associations strongly supported it. And yet many individual teachers to whom I spoke, and I spoke to large numbers, while in favour of the principle, were strongly against it being brought into force at a time when all knew there were not the schools, the teachers or

the text-books to meet the needs of the increased numbers. Were the education authorities and teachers' associations entirely impartial in making their recommendations; were they thinking only of the children or was there some feeling that an increase in the school population might enhance the importance not only of the profession, but of individuals?

At the same conference of the Federation of Class Teachers, complaints were voiced about the many odd jobs with which teachers are inundated and the time wasted on such things as Savings Campaigns which could, more profitably, be spent on teaching. With this general proposition every thinking person will agree though one particular complaint, that teachers should not have to supervise school meals, carries little weight, observing that the staff of all boarding schools do this as a matter of course.

The increase in what may be termed side issues is largely due to the bad habit which has arisen of relieving parents of their responsibilities and the nauseating, vote-catching clap-trap, indulged in by all political parties, about this or that being "free." Of course, nothing is "free"; it all has to be paid for by the public in the shape of rates or taxes. On the other hand, parents are irritated by needless and, in fact, ridiculous restrictions placed on employment of children, e.g., the recent orders prohibiting the delivery of newspapers by school-children and the regulation which forbids a school child putting in an hour or two helping a local farmer or gardener after school hours. Regulations there must be but in reason.

We are then faced with certain definite facts. The education bill is more than the country can afford in present circumstances. Parents do not contribute enough. Side issues infringe on teaching time. Teachers are too few; classes too big. The position is too serious for minor economies, such as the recently proposed cuts in transport facilities, to meet the case. Something more and bigger must be done. What is the solution?

As a first step parents must pay more and the State less. Parents should pay for milk. The waste of milk at present is appalling. In the course of visits to many schools it was distressing to see the large numbers of full and partially emptied bottles standing outside, waiting to be thrown away. Teachers everywhere stated that many of the children would not touch it while a large proportion of those who did only took a few sips and left the rest. Let the parents pay 2d. or even 1d. if they wish their child to have milk. Waste would be cut 80 per cent. in a week. Head teachers should be allowed to exercise their discretion in the way of remitting charges in cases of real need; they know the parents and are perfectly competent to deal with special cases. Milk saved can be sent to the cheese factories thus saving dollars now spent on imported cheese.

Cost of school dinners is not covered by parents' contributions. Why should they not pay full cost of dinners or else send the child to school with a pack

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meal? The alternative of the child going home for dinner may not be possible in all cases due to distance, but a hot meal in the middle of the day, though desirable, is not essential. Parents should also pay for transport; there is no justifiable reason why this should be "free." With the high wages now almost universal throughout the country there is not one family in a thousand where these small extra charges would amount to a hardship.

All side issues such as Savings Campaigns, or anything which interferes with teaching time must be rigorously excluded from the curriculum. The charge that State education produces a high percentage of illiterates, must be refuted, not by impassioned denials, but by practical results, i.e., by ensuring that every pupil leaves school firmly grounded in the three "R's."

The present training schemes aim at having 237,000 teachers in grant-aided schools by 1953. This will be an increase of approximately 40,000 on present numbers and should enable the size of classes to be reduced. The ratio of teachers to pupils will then be one to slightly under twenty-five, as against slightly under twenty-eight to-day. This is admittedly an improvement, but it is still not good enough.

Classes must not only be of reasonable size; they must have adequate space. Building of new schools is a long-term policy and, in any case, the programme has had to be cut in the interests of national economy. Actually the new schools planned were far more elaborate and costly than was essential to adequate and healthy education.

Parents' contributions, no side issues, more teachers, all are steps in the right direction but, if we are to ensure that all children get a really solid grounding, something much bigger is required. Only one thing can do it in conditions as they are to-day. Put the school leaving age back to fourteen.

This may be regarded as a retrograde step and some, reading the proposal, will dub the author a "reactionary." This term has never been clearly defined. It is commonly used as a term of abuse for those not of the speaker's political persuasion, but in this case it would no doubt be used to imply that the author was trying "to throw a spanner in the works." The charge is unjustified. What is suggested is that in education, as in other matters, to hurry too fast results in tripping over one's own feet and a disastrous fall. Further, by 1952, the year that Marshall Aid ceases, if, indeed, it continues so long, this plan will release nearly half a million extra to augment the country's labour force. In our present desperate situation desperate remedies are needed. We must put the country first. Surely it is to the country's advantage that we should ensure that all children have a really solid grounding firmly installed rather than that we should turn out a small number of university standard and a large number of illiterates. If and when better times come, the whole problem can be reconsidered. The French have word for it . . . "*reculer pour mieux sauter*."

**Mr. R. E. Burnett, M.A. (Oxon.), A.M.I.E.E.**, has been appointed Manager of the Education Department and Principal of the Marconi College at Chelmsford, Essex, from June 1st. Mr. Burnett was recently occupied with special duties in connection with the recruitment of specialists for overseas Governments. Before that he was Head of the Mathematics, Physics and Electrical Engineering side of the Technical and Scientific Register of the Ministry of Labour.

## New Schools Code for Scotland

The issue by the education authorities of a School Leaving Record to every pupil leaving school is one of the main provisions of the Schools (Scotland) Code, 1950, issued by the Scottish Education Department. The Record, the form of which is to be prescribed, will show the pupil's proficiency in the subjects he has studied and the part he has played in the life of the school.

From August 1st the Code will regulate the conduct of public and grant-aided schools in Scotland. It replaces the Code of 1939 and a number of new or different provisions are made.

An education authority is required, where the approved time table for a secondary department provides for not less than sixty hours of instruction per week in a subject, to employ a principal teacher of that subject. Provision is also made for the combination of cognate subjects and for the appointment of a principal teacher of the combined subjects where the hours of instruction are not less than sixty hours.

Authorities are required to appoint part-time woman advisers in any secondary department with 200 or more girls, and to provide adequate clerical assistance for head teachers.

Two sports days a year (or more with the approval of the Secretary of State) may be counted as attendances.

The Code prescribes how the "standard capacity" of a room for the accommodation of pupils is to be determined and requires that this limit shall not be exceeded without the consent of H.M. Inspector of Schools.

The maximum number of pupils that may be under the charge of one teacher in primary departments is reduced from fifty to forty-five. The number of children in the charge of a teacher in a one-teacher school is also restricted to twenty-five; in a two-teacher school to thirty; and in a three-teacher school to thirty-five. Power is given to the Inspector to authorize classes larger than the maximum for such period as is reasonable, having regard to all the circumstances.

The Code prescribes minimum requirements, and it is open to an education authority to make more generous provision if they so desire.

## Schools Building Trust in Northern Ireland

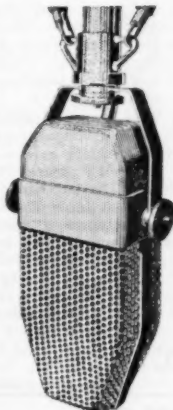
The Northern Ireland Minister of Education (Mr. H. C. Midgley) is examining, in conjunction with the Ministry of Finance, the possibility of establishing a Schools Building Trust for N. Ireland. He said that if this could be accomplished they could at least double the output on erection of intermediate schools within the next ten years. If the local education authorities would agree to delegate the authority for the building of schools to this centralized authority (upon which all the local education authorities would be represented) for a period of ten years he believed that the results would be so astonishing and beneficial that at the end of the decade there would be a united request for the carrying on of the good work.

**In spite of protests** Middlesex Education Committee has confirmed proposed increased charges for the use of school halls outside school hours, on the ground that the present scale is uneconomical.



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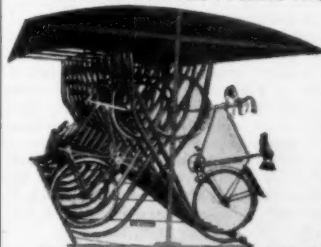
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## BOOK NOTES

**Nursery-Infant Education** (Published for the N.U.T. by Evans Brothers; 5s. net.)

The Reports of Consultative Committees set up from time to time by the Executive of the National Union of Teachers are among the most refreshing of current educational publications. Their particular value lies in the fact that they are drawn up by men and women actually engaged in the work which forms the subject-matter of the reports. The supervisor and the administrator give place here to the practical worker in the field, and the result is, as one might expect, realistic and constructive.

The recent Report on Nursery-Infant Education is no exception. The picture which emerges is one of much devoted and inspired work being carried on in this all-important field, often under appallingly discouraging conditions. Beginning with a historical survey of the developing social conscience which has led first to the study of the educational needs of young children and then to the attempt to meet those needs, the Report goes on to consider present practice and to suggest desirable reforms first at the nursery and then at the infant stage. Special attention is given to the function and application of activity methods and some useful words are added on the recruitment and training of teachers for this work. Not the least valuable section of the Report are the appendices giving some of the raw material on which the committee's conclusions were based. The Report, indeed, is an ample proof that, although the N.U.T. rightly busies itself with attempting to improve the material standards of its members, it is fully aware of its wider responsibilities to the community at large.—E.F.C.

**Physical Activities for Boys' Schools**, by F. J. C. Marshall. (University of London Press; 6s. net.)

The book consists, apart from useful chapters on lesson-planning and teaching technique, of twelve graded programmes, one for each term of a four year course. The work covers gymnastic movements, "game forms" of exercises, partner contests and those requiring the use of apparatus. In addition there are twenty-eight programmes providing a course of training in games and athletics.

While it is doubtful whether the fully trained specialist in physical education would wish to follow the programmes slavishly—nor, one is sure, would the writer wish him to do so—their richness of suggestion and careful planning make them an admirable quarry from which even the most experienced P.T. instructor will find much to supplement his own collected material. Mr. Marshall, who is Superintendent of Physical Education for Bradford Education Committee, is to be congratulated on the production of a handbook which might well do much to improve the standard of P.T. in secondary schools.—E.F.C.

**English Political Thought in the Nineteenth Century**, by Crane Brinton. (Ernest Benn; 15s. net.)

"I have not meant this to be primarily a text-book" says Professor Brinton in his preface to this second edition, nor has the style or treatment anything of the didactic or

pedestrian about it. The book consists mainly of a series of studies of political writers who have been chosen as representing the many currents and cross-currents of political thought during the nineteenth century. The selection is sometimes unexpected and the judgments are lively and provocative. Generous quotation from the works of the writers treated gives added life and freshness to the book and enables the reader to catch the authentic flavour of the particular man and period under discussion. The general reader who wishes to trace the foundations on which current political thought has been built, and the student seeking a stimulating and readily intelligible introduction to the study of nineteenth century political theory, should both find their needs met by this extremely able and attractive survey.—E.F.C.

**Backward Children in the Making**, by Charles Segal. (Frederick Muller; 7s. 6d. net.)

We appear to be coming to the end of the "abstract theory" phase in the post-war upsurge of educational thought. A more practical era is upon us. Teachers and other field-workers are recording their experiences, their attempts to apply the new theories, their constructive conclusions based on first-hand observation. Such a book is Mr. Segal's survey of conditions among a class of backward children entrusted to his care.

But this is a survey with a difference. To begin with, it has not been made with present conditions only in view. Ten years ago the writer, a schoolmaster in a working-class London area, carried out a similar examination, and he is thus able to see his present findings against the earlier picture. And the result is disquieting. The incidence of backwardness has doubled, home conditions are far worse for many families, delinquency is more frequent, overcrowding more common. The one encouraging feature is the improved physique of the children as a result of school meals.

Mr. Segal's method is severely factual. This is not to say that his book is dull; indeed, it is more intimate, alive and evocative than many a novel. But every statement, every conclusion, every suggestion is carefully supported by evidence, wherever possible expressed exactly and quantitatively. There is no vague humanitarianism here; facts have been collected, arranged and allowed to speak for themselves. It is this that gives such force to the writer's general recommendations with which he ends the book. Thank you, Mr. Segal. We could do with more books like this.—E.F.C.

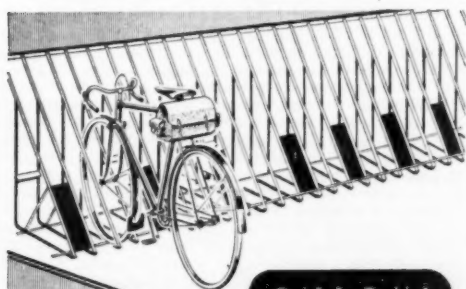
**The Wide Range Readers**, by F. J. Schonell and Phyllis Flowerdew. (Oliver and Boyd).

These readers represent the practical application of Dr. Schonell's pioneer researches into the psychology of reading. The two series, each of six books, are planned to provide suitable material for pupils with a wide range of reading attainment within the same class, once their "reading ages" have been established by means of the graded word tests given in the author's *The Psychology and Teaching of Reading*. The grading is by vocabulary control and sentence structure. The subject-matter is well varied and calculated to arouse and maintain the interest of children of the appropriate ages, but one wonders, perhaps, what the children will make of the title of the series.—E.F.C.

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## Prospect for the Land

A very fully illustrated booklet, "designed to increase the country-man's awareness of the great part that agricultural development has to play in giving a firm and lasting foundation to national economic recovery," has been published by the Stationery Office. It is entitled *Prospect for the Land*, and was written last Autumn by Mr. F. L. Easterbrook; it explains why, in the author's view, the history of the inter-war years is not likely to be repeated.

The townsman, apt to think of Britain solely as an industrial nation, is reminded that, even in the 1930's, the value of home produced foodstuffs "was greater than that of the whole agricultural production of the Dominion of Canada, or the combined output of the agriculture of New Zealand and Australia."

The Golden Age of British farming, points out Mr. Easterbrook, was the nineteenth century, when "anyone who wanted to see the most progressive things in agriculture... came to Britain to learn. For British farming was sustaining a population that had risen from eight to thirty millions; Britain had invented the drill, the threshing machine, and the steam plough; had created the modern system of land drainage, and had developed the crop rotations that have enabled us to farm our land for a thousand years without any serious problem of soil erosion. The landowners of Britain—in their day the pioneers of agricultural progress—had developed, as no other country had dreamt of developing, the breeds of livestock that are now famous throughout the world. We drained the clays, we built up the sands, we wrested new farms from forests, hill and swamp. By 1860 we had reached a degree of perfection in food production untouched by any other country."

In contrast is presented the half century up to the second world war when "the industry was exposed to the competition of imported food in a crazy world where meat was dumped in the sea, maize was used to stoke railway engines, and coffee was burnt in heaps. Farmers were not farming here to produce food, but to avoid going bankrupt. On our best lands the finest farming in the world could still be seen, but a great part of our countryside displayed an appalling picture of neglect, with productive land going to waste, farm buildings and houses falling down, land drainage systems no longer functioning, farm roads overgrown and unusable, fences broken and livestock using our neglected pastures for exercising grounds, while farmers played the part of agricultural waiters, serving up imported feeding stuffs."

Turning to the future, Mr. Easterbrook gives a word of warning. "It would be rash, in my opinion, to expect the present level of all farm prices to continue for ever," he argues, "nor would it add to the stability of the industry if there were too wide a gap between world food prices and prices paid to British farmers in their protected market. The solution to this problem is to reduce costs of production by increasing efficiency—and it is improving steadily—and by raising output, so that there is no decline in the net return from their farming enterprises. It is, therefore, part and parcel of the security of British agriculture that its production costs be above suspicion and its prices provide no ammunition for those dreamers from a bygone age who still believe that 'cheap' food and easy exports can resurrect Victorian doctrines."

The writer develops his argument that such times are unlikely ever to return, instancing the present world food situation, aggravated by increasing populations and the losses of fertile acres through soil erosion; the growth everywhere of industrial production that has raised the value of food in terms of manufactured goods, and the continuing need to replace dollar food imports by increased home production.

What are the prospects of achieving the Government's 1952 target of 15 per cent. more food than we produced even

at the peak of the war-time effort? "Output at that level," points out Mr. Easterbrook, "would be half as much again as before the war. In some respects, notably milk, we are ahead of schedule on that programme; only in the case of wheat have we been appreciably behind, and there are special reasons for that. Total output in the current season looks like working out at about 35 per cent. above pre-war. Promising as this is, progress must be even faster in the next three years. Moreover, most farmers would say that the programme we hope to fulfil, or even exceed, by 1952, need only be a first instalment. We are very far from farming our country to its full capacity."

British farming has already much to be proud of. With a great concentration of manpower, the Low Countries and Denmark obtain slightly higher yields per acre and slightly more milk per cow, but the output per man in British agriculture is by far the highest in Europe, and no other country in the world has such a concentration of tractor-power.

Capital investment, new methods of crop rotation, better balance between arable and livestock, greater mechanization and the sharing by smaller farmers of a common pool of the more expensive machinery, are methods which are already applied, but are being developed on an ever-widening scale. The importance of grass and the marginal lands is also stressed by the writer.

"We are in a state of flux now," he writes in his concluding paragraphs, "with established principles dissolving and new ones being sought for and shaped to take their place. The one valuable commodity of which we are not short is ideas, and there is at large in the world an immense amount of goodwill and desire to build something better, even though evil is not yet dead. Out of this chaos and confusion, this melting down of old values and the bewildering search for the new, something good and solid will surely come. The one thing which seems as certain as anything can be in the ever changing scene is that Britain is going to need her farmers, not just to-day and to-morrow, but for as many years ahead as human perceptions can see."

*Prospect for the Land* contains 46 pages and 67 illustrations, and was written by Mr. Easterbrook at the invitation of the Economic Information Unit of the Treasury after consultation with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, on lines suggested by those Departments, and with their help in the provision of basic information. In the presentation of the argument and the selection of detailed facts, the author has exercised his own judgment. While the text is thus broadly in accordance with the agricultural policy of His Majesty's Government, it should not be regarded as either a complete or an official statement of such policy.

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Copies of the regulations and further information may be obtained from the Director of the Department of Extra-Mural Studies, University of London, Senate House, London, W.C.1.

Out of 5,770 school children's cycles examined by Kent police, no less than 2,388 were found to need attention.

## OFFICIAL ADVERTISEMENTS

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## Summer Schools

**The Tenth Roel Summer School of Puppetry** will be held at Cheltenham from August 12th to 26th, and will offer a thorough course of tuition in the making of a string puppet, or marionette. Each student will design, make, string and costume a puppet, and will afterwards operate it in one of the plays which are produced at the end of the Course, thus covering all the phases from the planning of the puppet to the actual production of the play. Although the greater part of the time will be taken up with the string puppet, instruction will also be given in the making and manipulating of the simpler types of puppets, i.e., Shadow Figures, Glove Puppets, Rod and Rod-and-Glove Puppets, and students will see a show given with each kind. There will also be a Toy Theatre Show and a String Puppet Show. Students will thus be able to see the different types of puppets in action, and will be the better able to assess the potentialities and limitations inherent in each kind.

Details from the Secretary, Roel Summer School, Guiting Power, near Cheltenham.

Under the directorship of Dr. J. Macalister Brew, who is to give a series of lectures on personal relationships, the National Association of Girls' Clubs and Mixed Clubs' fourth Annual Summer School is to take place at Westhill Training College, Selly Oak, Birmingham, from July 22nd to 28th. Among the lecturers are Mr. Barclay Russell, Chairman of the Society for Education in Art, and Miss Margaret Leona. A recent survey on mixed clubs revealed the lack of sufficient activities for girls in the majority of youth clubs. A special group is, therefore, to study home-making, dress-making, decorating and social behaviour with Mrs. C. M. Hughes, one of the special programme advisors appointed by the National Association through the generosity of King George's Jubilee Trust to develop crafts and hobbies in clubs. Particulars from the National Association, 30-32, Devonshire Street, London, W.1.

**The Programme** for the Summer School of Electrical Housecraft open to Science and Domestic Science Teachers, which the Electrical Association for Women is arranging at King's College of Household and Social Science, from September 21st to 26th, is now available from the Association, 35, Grosvenor Place, London, S.W.1. The teaching of Electrical Housecraft in schools will be demonstrated by Miss M. J. Gordon, B.Sc., M.A., who last year visited the U.S.A., as an Exhibitor under the Caroline Haslett Trust. Mr. Philip Honey, of the British Electrical Development Association, will speak on the Structure of Electricity Tariffs, and the teachers will visit the E.L.M.A. Lighting Service Bureau to witness a lecture demonstration entitled "Appreciation of Modern Lighting Techniques," by Mr. E. B. Sawyer. A session on the E.A.W. Certificates and Diplomas will be conducted by Miss Vera Norvick, Assistant Secretary of the Association, and included in the programme is a visit to E.A.W. Headquarters.

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## Shortage of Women Teachers is serious, says Minister

Speaking at Nottingham, where he was opening four new schools, last month, the Minister of Education, Mr. George Tomlinson, said that the serious shortage of women teachers was likely to continue indefinitely and that it was going to be very difficult to fill the available places in training colleges.

There were, he said, now 9,000 places for women students in training colleges each year, but that of the 17,000 girls completing a full secondary course, 4,000 went to universities, leaving only 13,000 for teaching and all the other professions and occupations.

"It is obviously not easy to fill 9,000 training college places out of an output of only 13,000, but," he added, "however much we need more women teachers we have never given, and I hope never shall give, a guarantee that every young woman who wants to can become a teacher. A guarantee of that kind would amount to dropping all our standards. I am sorry for those who are disappointed in this way, but it is no use writing to me about it. I cannot force any individual on any training college."

"In the long run," he continued, "the shortage can only be overcome by increasing the total number of girls stopping on at school after the age of sixteen, but local education authorities should develop their Further Education service so that recruits can be looked for among young women who have left school before sixteen but have continued their education on a part-time basis. In the meantime, it is necessary for these authorities to increase the proportion of men teachers in their employment."

Referring to the enormous school building programme facing the country, Mr. Tomlinson stated that at the end of last year there was £70 million worth of work under construction on the site. Illustrating what this meant, he said that within about eighteen months nearly 20 per cent. of the children of Nottingham would be housed in post-war school buildings. It would, however, be necessary both in Nottingham and over the whole country to continue school building at a very high rate to meet the various urgent needs.

Mr. Tomlinson said that there had been much misunderstanding about the educational building programme for 1951. Local education authorities had recently been notified that they could start planning their 1951 programme on a percentage basis of the 1950 programme. This had been interpreted in some quarters as the limit of the building to be allowed, but Mr. Tomlinson gave an assurance that this was not so. It was, he said, only an instalment and added that he would shortly be announcing further details of the 1951 programme.

**Grays (Essex) Juvenile Delinquency Committee** have recommended that birching should again be put on the statute book as a deterrent to juvenile crime.

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## Road Safety for Children

In a statement issued last month, the National Road Transport Safety Council says it views with concern the renewed pressure that is being brought to bear upon the Ministry of Transport, to raise the speed limit for heavy commercial vehicles, from 20 to 30 m.p.h. Child Safety Week has recently been held, and attention drawn to the fact that last year 38,000 children were killed or injured in road accidents. A large proportion of the child victims involved in accidents are with heavy commercial vehicles. In addition to this, the most recent accident figures issued by the Ministry of Transport show a substantial increase.

Surely, says the statement, there would be no rhyme nor reason in incurring a large expenditure of public money appealing to children to take care, if immediately afterwards the Government were to make a decision that would increase the dangers of the roads.

The proposed increase is opposed by the Association of Municipal Corporations; the Urban District Councils Associations; the Standing Joint Committee of the Metropolitan Boroughs; many Road Safety Committees; the National Committee on Cycling and the Pedestrians' Association. Until such time as motorways are constructed, this Council strongly opposes a step that would undoubtedly add to the tragic toll of the roads, especially among children.

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## GRAMOPHONE REVIEW

**More Poetry.**—H.M.V. have recorded twelve poems by Stephen Spender (H.M.V. C3987/9). The selection has been made by Spender himself and the poems are read by him. They are not easy. The general idea of each poem can be easily appreciated, but the more detailed thoughts within the poems are difficult to grasp. There is some very vivid word-painting, particularly in the war poems and in the "Classroom in a Slum," poem. Much of his work has a definite social content and is extremely thought-provoking; but on the whole the poems are not suitable for schools and some of them are undoubtedly depressing.

In making his selection, Spender says: "In choosing these poems I have taken some of those which are most liked by other people, some which I like particularly myself, and some which seem suited to reading because they are narrative and fairly simple."

For those acquainted with Spender's work, it is as well to know which poems are recorded and they are given in the following list:

- First Record:** I think continually of those who were truly great.  
The landscape near an aerodrome.  
Epilogue to a human drama.  
Responsibility: the pilots who destroyed Germany in the Spring of 1945.  
Almond tree in a bombed city.
- Second Record:** Tom's a-cold.  
Elegy to Margaret—I.
- Third Record:** An Elementary School classroom in a slum.  
Ultima Regio Regum.  
Judas Iscariot.  
Awakening.  
Word.  
Empty House.

**Londonderry Air.**—There is a new Columbia record of "Londonderry Air" and "Handel in the Strand" (Col. DX 1660). The Grainger arrangement of "Londonderry Air," is truly dignified and is a useful corrective to the many sentimental settings that have appeared in the past. Not that the sentimental settings are without value. They have served the purpose of popularizing this very beautiful melody, which is a necessary preliminary to the fuller appreciation of the arrangement. The remarkable richness of the 'cellos when they first play the air, and the beautiful tone quality of the horn in the final climax, make the recording exceedingly pleasurable to listen to.

On the reverse side is Percy Grainger's own music "Handel in the Strand." Full of fun, vigour and rhythm, this record should be very successfully used in the schools. The playing is done by the Philharmonia Orchestra under the conductorship of Warwick Braithwaite, and the piano in "Handel in the Strand," is delightfully played by Ernest Lush.

**Other Recordings.**—Of help to the student of the 'cello will be the playing of Gaspar Cassado in the Sarabande and the well-known Bourrées from Bach Suite No. 3 in C (Columbia LX 1295). Unaccompanied 'cello playing is even more exacting than unaccompanied violin playing and in

this record I feel that the 'cello tone is not as good as the tone achieved by the Philharmonia Orchestra.

Another single record is of an attractive song by Boyce, 'Tell me lovely Shepherd,' coupled with 'Bid me discourse,' Bishop's setting of Shakespeare's words from 'Venus and Adonis,' both sung by Margaret Ritchie (H.M.V. C3983)—H.P.

## The School Government Chronicle in America

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In our review of "The Complete Projectionist," in the May issue of the SCHOOL GOVERNMENT CHRONICLE the price was given as 12s. 6d. We are asked to say that this should have been 10s. 6d.

**Essex Education Committee** have approved a proposal that staffs in school kitchens should be provided with uniform caps at an estimated cost of £1,000, conditional upon the employees concerned being responsible for laundering accounts.

**The Minister of Education** has appointed Mr. S. G. Raybould, Director of Extra Mural Studies at Leeds University, to be a member of the Central Advisory Council for Education (England) in place of Mr. Lionel Elvin, who has resigned on his appointment as Director of Education to Unesco in Paris.

**The first educationist** to visit the United Kingdom from Indonesia at the invitation of the British Council, Dr. Raden Mohammed Moehsin Djodjodigono, Acting Director of the University Section of the Indonesian Ministry of Education, arrived in London on June 26th, for a six weeks' study of the British educational system, particularly of university education and administration, technical education, and all forms of adult education.

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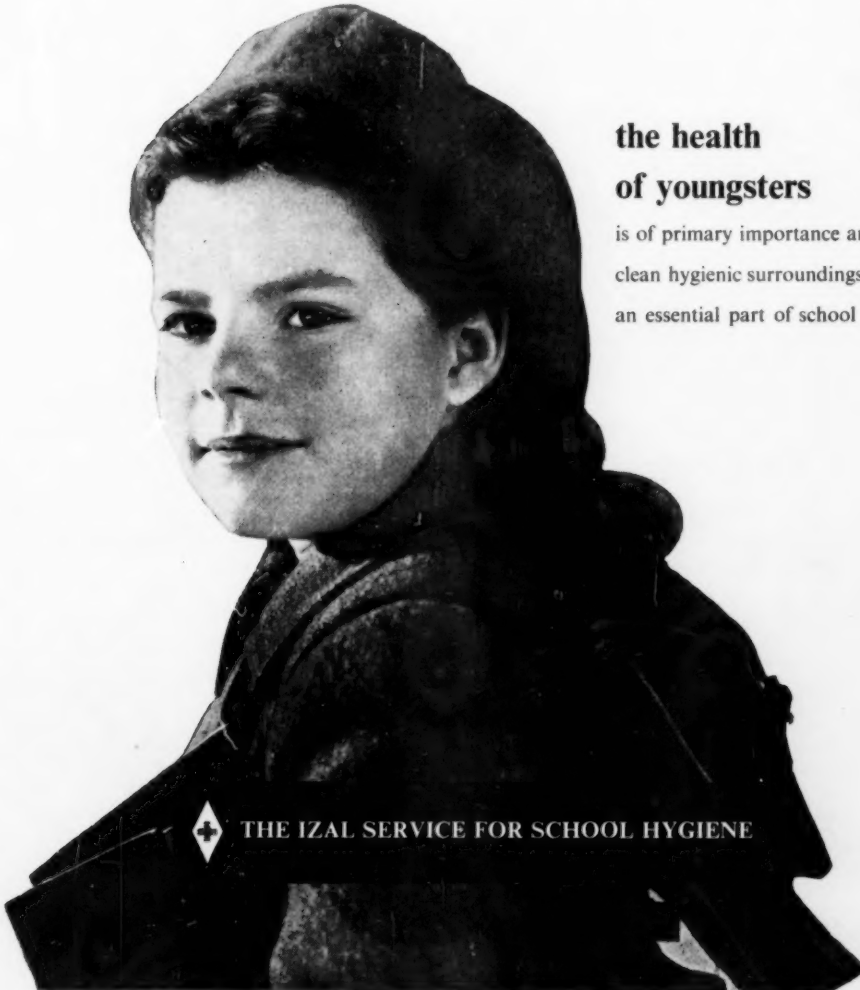
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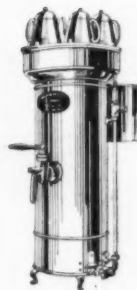
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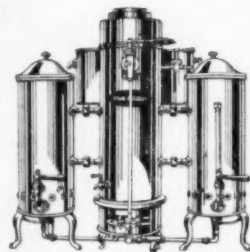
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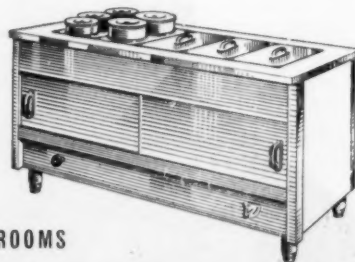
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